

LINCOLN CAMPAIGN SONGS

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Abraham Lincoln and Music

Lincoln Campaign Songs

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

WIDE AWAKE CELEBRATION.

Whence are these charming sounds I hear?
Loud swelling on the midnight air,
Do I dream, or am I in fairy land?
Have the stars dropped down on that moving
band?
How their gay banners wave to the cool night
breeze!
What bright rainbow hues are seen mid the
trees!
Whence this army in dark array?
With torch-lights turning night to day.
With music and drums of thundering sound,
They tramp by hundreds along the ground.
What is the meaning of this parade?
Why, the people such pomp displayed?
For the President, eh? For Lincoln? ah!
Then that is the cause of this "Hurrah?"
Suppose he did *split rails*, what then?
Does it not prove him the best of men?
Not one with an empty heart and head,
Ashamed to *work* for his daily bread.
But one, I trust, who would do his best,
To make good laws, and free the oppressed
From slavery's galling yoke!
Whoever *is* President, may he be
Firm for Union and Liberty,
And may the God who reigns above,
Endow his soul with early love.
May wisdom, virtue, goodness, grace,
Find in his heart a resting place.
And when he kneels from day to day,
Before the Throne; *then* may he pray.
O God, may our bright land ever be
The happy home of the good and free.

Popular Song Helped Put Abe Lincoln in White House

2/12/5

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Feb. 12.—(U.P.)—The Nation today observed the 142nd anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, martyred President who only 91 years ago was a backwoods lawyer.

Every schoolboy knows the story of Honest Abe today, but in February, 1860, he was just beginning to come into his own. A speech at Cooper Union Institute, New York City, and a popular song helped him on his way.

Lincoln outlined his Republican principles in the Cooper Union speech on February 27, 1860, and they went over big with a newly-born New England branch of the GOP called the "Wide-Awake" party.

The Wide-Awakes penned a song they sang wherever Lincoln stopped during his 1860 New England tour after the Cooper Union address.

OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

The song was sung to a tune resembling "The Old Grey Mare" and went this way:

"Old Abe Lincoln came out of
the wilderness,

Old Abe Lincoln came out of
the wilderness,

Old Abe Lincoln came out of
the wilderness, down in
Illinois.

Ain't I glad I jined the Wide-
Awakes, jined the Wide-
Awakes, jined the Wide-
Awakes.

Ain't I glad I jined the Wide-
Awakes, down in Illinois."

The Wide-Awakes' jaunty ditty was one of the first instances of public recognition of the importance of the Cooper Union speech.

MIXED REACTION

Reaction to the speech in his stamping grounds in Illinois was mixed, however. Two newly-found documents, one a newspaper clipping and the other the text of a speech, tell the story.

The speech was delivered by Milton Hay of the Springfield Republican Club when Lincoln returned from his Eastern trip. Hay was Lincoln's first law student.

Hay hailed the speech at Cooper Union as a proclamation of the "new Republican party conservatism."

The newspaper clipping comes from a state capital newspaper which had an opposite reaction to Lincoln's New York address. It described the speech with these words:

"Subject—Not known.

"Consideration—\$200 and expenses.

"Object—Presidential capital.

"Effect—Disappointed."

Two months later Lincoln was nominated for the presidency.



Courtesy Brown University Library.

THE LINCOLN QUICK-STEP—Rare cover page of an 1860 campaign song written by Wilmington composer Charles Grobe. A later edition, published after the election, showed President Lincoln with a beard. Still another campaign song, titled "The Rail Splitter's Polka," was published by Harry Tatnall of Wilmington. None of these rare items of Lincolniana is to be found in any Delaware historical collection.

Lincoln

(Continued From Page One)

and I'll tend to mine." He explained that Congress had been polled and that he was sure of success.

Among other things, Lincoln said: "I am satisfied that this is the cheapest and most humane way of ending the war. If I can get this plan started in Delaware I have no fear but that all the other border states will accept it."

His Friends Balked

Burton assured the President that Delaware slave owners would be glad to dispose of their Negroes at a fair valuation, and Lincoln was "delighted." Upon his return Burton presented the plan to some friends, but with the single exception of one slave owner who feared the slaves would be freed eventually without compensation, he encountered opposition.

Fisher and Nathaniel B. Smithers in Dover drew up a bill to emancipate all slaves over 35 years of age. The remainder would be freed by 1872 except children who were apprenticed until they reached the age of maturity. Funds for payment were to come from a federal appropriation of \$900,000.

After a caucus of friends of the measure at Smithers' house, it was decided to ascertain the attitude of members of the legislature. When a member from Sussex County was shown the bill, he became indignant, for the people knew nothing of it, the legislature had not been elected for the purpose, and enough trouble existed already over "the infernal Negro question." While he regarded "slavery as a curse," he thought freeing the Negro "a greater curse."

House Wouldn't Agree

The poll revealed that with the support of two Democrats, Wilson L. Cannon and Jacob Moore, the proposal would pass in the Delaware Senate, but that in the House of Representatives, Robert A. Cochran, the only member who had been elected as a true Lincoln man, was opposed. Therefore the bill would be defeated by one vote. Under the circumstances the measure was not introduced, though news of the plan leaked out.

The first newspaper to note Lincoln's proposal was the Delawarean. "This is the first step," it reported; "if it shall succeed, others will follow tending to elevate the Negro to an equality with the white man or rather to degrade the white man by obliterating the distinction between the races." The Republican praised the plan as a "God-send" to many owners since slaves were depreciating in value and the institution was tottering. Such a golden opportunity might never come again, it said.

The Democrats in the Delaware House of Representatives introduced resolutions in opposition, saying the members were not elected with the view of considering an act of emancipation, the question would dis-

turb the quiet and harmony in the state, and Congress had no right to appropriate a dollar for the purchase of slaves. The resolutions asserted that when the people of Delaware desired to abolish slavery within its borders, they would do so in their way without outside interference.

Senators Opposed

Delaware's three congressmen disagreed about the wisdom of the proposal. Rep. George Fisher pointed out that the cost of freeing the Negro in Delaware would be less than the cost of the war for half a day and that a substantial sum for colonizing the entire Negro population elsewhere

would be provided. He declared that the plan was "the very best" that could possibly be devised.

On the other hand, Senator Willard Saulsbury thought that "God, Nature, everything has made a distinction between the white man and the Negro." Senator James A. Bayard also opposed the emancipation act.

Thus the only serious attempt to emancipate the Negro in Delaware during the Civil War was defeated. Democratic opposition to increasing the number of freed Negroes in Delaware was the principal reason why the plan failed. Dr. Henry Clay Reed, in a special study of the plan, concluded that important among the reasons for its rejection were distrust of abolitionism, the political domination of Senators Bayard and Saulsbury, and a belief in its impracticability. From the rational point of view slave owners in Delaware missed a golden opportunity to dispose of their property, but emotionally the question was too involved with politics to succeed.

Miami News
February 12, 1958

Resurrected Song Recalls 'Honest Abe'

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 12 — America has always sung about its presidents and Abraham Lincoln was no exception.

Musical Americana, an organization that collects songs of America's past, reports that some 400 songs were written about Mr. Lincoln, the nation's 16th chief executive whose birthday is celebrated today.

His 1860 campaign song "Honest Old Abe" contained this verse:

"Ye Democrats list to my story,
"Ye Douglas-ites all give me
 heed,
"Though your candidate's run-
 ning for glory
"He's not making very good
 speed
"But out on the wide rolling
 prairie
"A tall sucker has taken the
 course
"Who will wind up the race in
 a hurry
"And distance your stubby-
 tailed horse."



Lincoln Lore

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THE ATTEMPT TO STEAL LINCOLN'S BODY

Editor's Note: The newspaper account of the attempt to steal Abraham Lincoln's body the night of November 7, 1876 (presidential election day), as reported by *The Chicago Tribune*, on Wednesday, November 8, 1876, must be one of the most sensational news stories in the history of American journalism.

A Xerox copy of the newspaper article has been called to the attention of the editor by Webb Garrison of Evansville, Indiana, who stated that "the story is of great historical importance because it was a national 'scoop' — whose veracity was at first challenged by other Chicago papers."

Of course the story was true, and the many ramifications of the plot and the people connected with the event wove itself into a bizarre and complicated narrative.

One of the most unique books in all Lincolniana was published in Springfield, Illinois, in 1890, bearing the title, *History Of An Attempt To Steal The Body Of Abraham Lincoln*. The author was John Carroll Power, custodian of the Lincoln Tomb, who from the very first suspected the ghoulish plot and played a leading role in the apprehension of the criminals. Power's devoted 105 pages of his 287 page book to the details of the crime. In his introduction, he wrote among other things that, "This volume is a record, in the plainest language possible, of the plottings prior to, and of the attempt to steal, the body of Abraham Lincoln, in order to make merchandise of it."

When *The Chicago Tribune* published their first story about the crime, their reporters could not foretell the eventual outcome of the case. Later, news stories would follow, but the minute details would be left for custodian, J. C. Power, to discuss and analyze in his book in 1890. Later condensed versions of the plot were published (see "Rendezvous at Oak Ridge" by King V. Hostick) and additional facts were gleaned from newly acquired evidence. One of the most factual accounts to embody the basic evidence was the account written by Louis A. Warren for *Lincoln Lore*, Number 792, June 12, 1944, entitled "The Plot to Steal The Lincoln Corpse."

The Chicago Tribune "scoop" is reprinted for the edification of our subscribers.

R. G. M.

HORRIBLE

Dastardly Attempt to Despoil the Lincoln Monument.

Thieves Trying to Steal the Bones of the Martyr President.

Warning Given, and Steps Taken to Arrest Them.

Elmer Washburn and His Assistants Waiting in the Dark.

The Robbers Interrupted by Accident, and Contrive to Escape.

Special Dispatch to *The Tribune*.

Springfield, Ill., Nov. 7. — An attempt was made this evening to perpetrate one of the most infamous outrages which the mind of man can conceive of — that of stealing the bones and ashes of Abraham Lincoln. Unfortunately the perpetrators escaped, leaving, however, the evidence of their crime behind them, and though

the clues are next to nothing, if human ingenuity can track them it will be done. Somehow or other, no one exactly knows how, J. C. Power, the custodian of the Lincoln monument, became impressed with the idea that there were designs upon the remains, and he communicated his suspicions to Leopold Swett and Robert Lincoln. They could hardly believe that any one, even the meanest and lowest scoundrel in the land, could conceive such a thing. However, to prevent the horse from getting out of the stable, they concluded to lock the door — to adopt precautions even should there be nothing in the feeling. Accordingly, Swett wrote Col. Stewart (Stuart), of this city, about two weeks ago, requesting him to station a guard at the monument. This was done, but no one came to disturb the corpse. Detective Tyrrell, of the United States Secret Service, whose headquarters are in Chicago, having business here, was

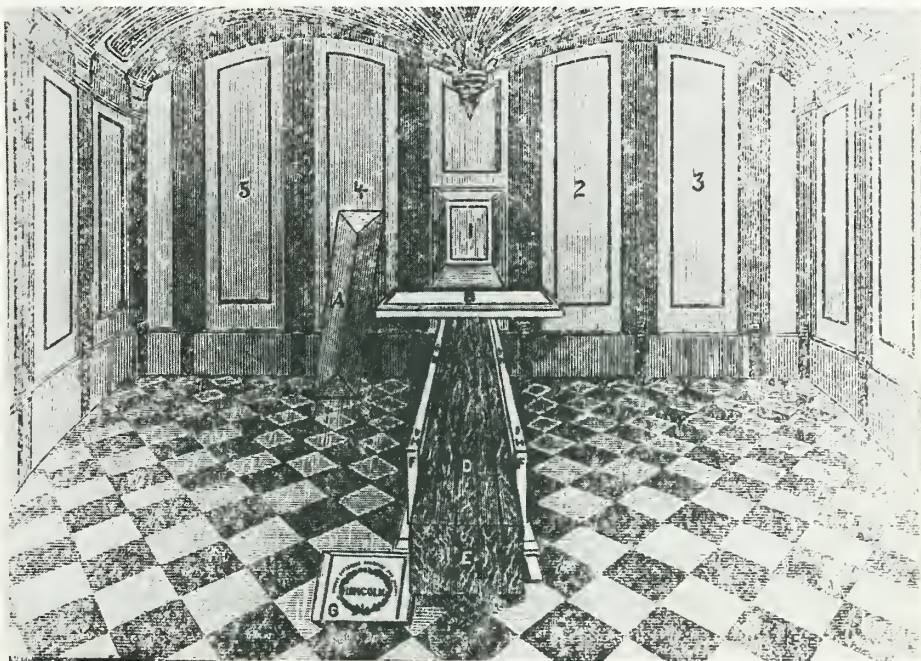


Illustration from the John Carroll Power book, *History Of An Attempt To Steal The Body Of Abraham Lincoln* . . .

Interior of the Catacomb, as the thieves left it. Crypts designed for the bodies of the Lincoln family were assigned as follows: (1) Lincoln, (2) William and Edward, (3) Thomas (Tad), (4) Mrs. Lincoln, (5) Robert. Lincoln's body rested in crypt No. 1 from September, 1871, until October, 1874, when it was placed in the marble sarcophagus. This entire arrangement of the Lincoln bodies (some members of the family were still living) was later changed. A, is the top or false lid of the marble sarcophagus. B, is the main lid of the marble sarcophagus. C, is one of the wooden temporary trestles supporting the sarcophagus. D, is the top of the red cedar coffin. E, is the end of the cedar coffin, drawn about eighteen inches out of the sarcophagus, ready to be carried away. FF, are the marble sides of the sarcophagus. H H H H, are copper dowels in the marble sides of the sarcophagus. G, is the marble end piece of the sarcophagus, bearing the inscription Lincoln, surrounded with an oaken wreath in marble. It is proper to state that this piece did not occupy the place it does in the picture, but was left by the vandals where it could not be seen from the door.

requested by Swett and Lincoln to see Mr. Power, and to look around town, and watch for suspicious characters. He arrived here three or four days ago, and at once commenced a vigorous shadowing of several of the small hotels, but he saw no one whom he recognized. This afternoon Mr. Power came into town in a hurry and hunted up Tyrrell and informed him that two very hard-looking cases had been out to the cemetery looking around, and he felt assured that they were there for no good purpose. One registered as from Racine, and the other from Kenosha, Wis. Their names are suppressed, since they have had nothing to do with what occurred later. An effort will of course be made to find out who they are, and should they prove to be innocent injustice would be done them by telling now who they are. Mr. Power, not being used to detective work, could give but meager descriptions of them. The result of the interview with Tyrrell is unknown, but he must have concluded that election night was an excellent one in which to rob the tomb.

The evening's train brought from Chicago ex-Chief of the Secret Service Elmer Washburn, who, it seems, had been requested by Swett and Lincoln to come here and aid Tyrrell. About half-past 6 Washburn, Tyrrell and three other men went out to Oakwood (Oak Ridge) and concealed themselves in Memorial Hall inside the monument to await developments. One man was posted in the labyrinth in the rear, so called because of the walls running in different directions and making numerous passage ways, these walls supporting the terrace. His object was to hear the noise made in the vault if any were made. After patiently waiting for nearly three hours, and when about tired out from standing still, the utmost silence being imparative, he heard a grating noise which lasted perhaps five minutes. Then, in a little while, came several successive thuds, as if some one was hammering. The time having arrived for action, Washburn and his men slipped out of the door, with cocked revolvers in their hands, determined to shoot to kill if any resistance was made. Just as they were turning the corner to the left one of the men accidentally exploded his revolver. The noise was very loud, so still were the surroundings, and unfortunately it was too loud, for, though there were but about 120 feet to go over, when the officers got to the door of the vault the dastardly villains were gone. They must have had some one watching to give them the signal of danger or else had come outside for a breath of fresh air and heard the snapping of the cap and ran into the woods which surrounded the monument. It is but a short distance, and a man could get within shelter and be unobservable in a quarter of a minute. The men at once scattered, and went in the direction the thieves had gone, and while dodging behind the trees, two of them exchanged shots, each mistaking the other for one of the fugitives. After shooting at each other, they cried "Wash," "Wash," indicative of a friend in such an emergency, and then they found out their mistake. The bullets whizzed close to both, and it was miraculous that they escaped injury.

No traces of the thieves being discovered, the party returned to the catacomb, and there beheld a sight which made them sad. The body, as is known perhaps, is inclosed in a lead casket. This is surrounded by a cedar case, and the receptacle of these is a marble sarcophagus. The latter had a double lid, the upper one not being as large as the other. Both had been pried off with a chisel or an ax, and somewhat chipped in the operation. The under lid was laid crosswise on the casket, the head-piece on the floor, and the upper lid standing against the wall. The casket itself was pulled out about a foot from the body of the sarcophagus, and a small piece had been taken off on the floor, where an ax with the edge full of marble-dust, an ordinary chisel, and a pair of nippers. The other tools had evidently been taken away since the lock on the iron-grated door had been sawed-off.

It should perhaps be stated that the sarcophagus was in the catacomb and not in the crypt, being thus placed in order that visitors might see it. The damage done is comparatively little.

The officers of course were disappointed at not catching the vandals, but they think it is only a question of a little time when they will be apprehended.

Only one motive can be attributed to these despoilers of the grave, and that is the hope of a reward for the restoration of the remains. If they had succeeded in

carrying them off, it certainly could not have been their intention to take away the casket, for it must weigh from 500 to 600 pounds, and half a dozen men could not have carried it to the fence for transfer to a wagon in the road. It is more than likely that they intended to cut open the casket and gather up the bones and dust of the martyr-President and put them in a bag. What would have been the indignation of the country had this been done! The scheme concocted by these men is certainly unparalleled in the history of crime and, now that there is evidence of minds so debased, it is certain that measures will be taken to guard the monument and prevent future attempts. The facts given above did not come until early this morning, and are known to only a few, otherwise the outrage would have occupied as great a share of the attention of the community as the election. Words cannot express the feelings of those who do know it, and it is earnestly hoped that the double . . . perpetrators of this attempted robbery of the remains of America's most loved President will soon be brought to justice.

A Lincoln Campaign Song - 1860

The May 5, 1908, *Oxford Democrat* of South Paris, Maine, published a Lincoln campaign song that was sung at a rally at Paris Hill, Maine, sometime in 1860. Hannibal Hamlin and his brother Elijah spoke at the rally. On the platform with them was a wooden chair said to be made of rails split by "Old Abe himself."

The text of the song was re-written in 1908 for the newspaper in response to a request from a reader. The person who wrote the words from memory (she well may have been at the rally in 1860) was Mrs. E. V. Canwell of South Paris. The singing of the Rally Song was led at the mass meeting at Paris Hill by "Mr. Locke, the army balladist." He may have been attached to the local militia.

The text of the song follows:

Hark! Hark! A signal gun is heard
Just out beyond the fort;
The good old ship of state, my boys
Is coming into port.
With tattered sails and anchor gone,
I fear the rogues will strand her.
She carried now a sorry crew,
And needs a new commander.

Old Ab'ram is the man
With a sturdy mate
From the Pine Tree State,
Old Ab'ram is the man.

Four years ago she put to sea,
With prospects brightly beaming;
Her hull was strong, her sails new bent,
And every pennant streaming.
She loved the gale, she plowed the wave,
Nor feared the deep's commotion.
Majestic gently on she sailed
Proud mistress of the ocean.

Buchanan was the man,
But his four year's trip,
Leaves a crippled ship,
Buchanan was the man.

Our ship is getting out of trim,
'Tis time to calk and grove her;
She's foul astern of human gore,
They've turned her to a slaver.
She has cruised about from coast to coast,
Her flying bondsmen hunting.
Until she strained from stem to stern,
And lost her sails in hunting.

Old Ab'ram is the man
With a sturdy mate
From the Pine Tree State,
Old Ab'ram is the man.

We'll give her what repairs she needs,
A thorough overhauling;
Her scurvy crew shall be dismissed
Into some honest calling,
Brave Lincoln soon shall take the helm,
On truth and right relying,
In calm or peace, in storm or war,
He'll keep her colors flying.

Brave Lincoln is the man,
With a sturdy mate
From the Pine Tree State
Brave Lincoln is the man.

Brig.-Gen. Ben Hardin Helm Mrs. Lincoln's "Rebel" Brother-In-Law

(Continued from February, 1972 issue)

Through correspondence with the Todd family, Lincoln had been informed that Mrs. Helm owned some six hundred bales of cotton located in Jackson, Mississippi, and Atlanta, Georgia, over which she wished to estab-

lish a claim of ownership. To take care of this matter, Lincoln added the following postscript to the document of amnesty:

"P. S. Mrs. Helm claims to own some cotton at Jackson, Mississippi and also some in Georgia; and I shall be glad, upon either place being brought within our lines, for her to be afforded the proper facilities to show her ownership, and take her property.

A. Lincoln"

The amnesty oath which Lincoln prepared for Mrs. Helm to subscribe was as follows:

"District of Columbia

SS.:

Washington County,

I, Emily T. Helm, do solemnly swear in presence of Almighty God that I will henceforth faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the union of the States, thereunder; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all acts of Congress passed during the existing rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by Congress, or by decisions of the Supreme Court; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all proclamations of the President, made during the existing rebellion, having reference to slaves so long and so far as not modified or declared void by the Supreme Court. So help me God."

Traveling northward by steamer under a flag of truce, Mrs. Helm arrived at Fortress Monroe. At that port a Federal officer came on board and told all the passengers that only those who would take the oath of allegiance to the United States would be allowed to land. In spite of her belief that she might be sent back to Georgia, the scene of her greatest sorrow, she steadfastly refused to take the oath. She was practically without funds and in great distress over the death of her gallant husband, but she remained adamant. She would not take the oath of allegiance, because her friends might feel that she had not been true to the cause for which her husband had given up his life. Her refusal was not that of bravado. The Union officers tried to reason with her, but she consistently refused to yield. She asked for permission to proceed to Washington on parole, pledging her word to return in case she was called upon to take the oath. Perplexed over the president's orders in regard to his sister-in-law, the officer in charge telegraphed Lincoln for further instructions. His reply was:

"Send her to me."

Realizing that she could not continue her journey to Kentucky, Mrs. Helm proceeded with one of her daughters to Washington, D. C. for a visit with the Lincolns. Upon her arrival at the Executive Mansion, she was cordially received. Emilie and Mary, both grief-stricken, because Mrs. Lincoln had lost her son, Willie, choked up with tears and tried to find comfort in each other's arms. After the amenities, she explained to her brother-in-law her predicament, and she told the president that she did not intend to embarrass him, or make herself conspicuous in any way, provided he would allow her to proceed to her home in Kentucky. With such explanations which Lincoln considered reasonable, she was accorded every kindness, and while a guest in the White House she occupied the bedroom which had been elaborately decorated for the visit of the Prince of Wales during the Buchanan administration.

Lincoln undoubtedly realized that Emilie's presence at the capital would start gossip-monger's tongues wagging about the rebel in the Executive Mansion. Orville H. Browning recorded in his diary that he called on the president on Monday, December 14, 1863, and that Lincoln told him "his sister-in-law, Mrs. Helm was in the house, but he did not wish it known." Evidently Lincoln was worried about the distressing financial condition of his sister-in-law, because he told Browning that "she wished an order for the protection of some cotton she had at Jackson, Mississippi. He thought she ought to have it, but he was afraid he would be censured if he did so."

If Lincoln hoped to keep Mrs. Helm's presence at the Executive Mansion a secret, he was doomed to disappointment, because this ardent Southerner could not keep her tongue when the Confederacy was assailed. After all, her husband had given his life for the South, and the least she could do would be to defend those

institutions which he had cherished. As a wife of a Confederate general, Mrs. Helm was to be the butt of many vindictive remarks from Northerners who did not relish her presence in Washington.

One day Senator Ira Harris and General Daniel E. Sickles paid the Lincolns a call and, upon greeting Mrs. Helm, the General said that he had told the Senator that she was in Washington and that perhaps she could give him some news concerning his old colleague, John C. Breckinridge. Mrs. Helm replied that she had not seen General Breckinridge for quite some time and that she could give him no news concerning his friend. To all of Senator Harris's questions, she gave him non-committal answers. Evidently this angered Harris, who remarked that the Union soldiers had whipped the rebels at Chattanooga and that he had heard that "the scoundrels ran like scared rabbits." This was more than Mrs. Helm could tolerate and she remarked that the Confederates had followed the example that the Federals had "set them at Bull Run and Manassas."

General Sickles could not forget this affront and he struggled on his crutches, because he had only one leg, to the president's room to tell Lincoln about his sister-in-law. Upon hearing of the details of the conversation, Lincoln said, "The child has a tongue like the rest of the Todds." This remark appeared to have further agitated the General and in an excited and domineering voice he told Lincoln, "You should not have that rebel in your house." This dictatorial manner on the part of Sickles angered Lincoln and he informed the general that he was usually in the habit of choosing his own guests, and that Mrs. Helm was in his house because she had been ordered there.

To prevent any further embarrassing situations, no one in the Lincoln household mentioned the war or politics, and, after nearly a week's visit, Mrs. Helm planned to resume her trip to Kentucky. To spare his sister-in-law further pain, Lincoln did not mention the oath of allegiance, and, before her departure, he earnestly expressed to her his sorrow over the death of her husband. In order that she might not be molested on her journey homeward, Lincoln gave her a letter "to protect her against the mere fact of being General Helm's widow." In providing Emilie with this safeguard to protect her person and property (except as to slaves), Lincoln said, "Little sister I never knew you to do a mean thing in your life. I know you will not embarrass me in any way on your return to Kentucky."

Emilie traveled to Kentucky fully aware that she should say nothing against the Lincoln administration, because of the president's kindness to her. However, Lexington and Elizabethtown were not the peaceful, serene communities that she had known before the war. In Lexington, she found conditions exceedingly trying because of the tyrannical rule of General Stephen G. Burbridge who was enforcing martial law upon the citizens of the Blue Grass Country. In fact, the blustering threats of Burbridge kept Mrs. Helm in a constant state of fear and she was afraid to leave the house. Nevertheless her presence in Lexington did not go unnoticed by the Union authorities, and, within less than a year after her return home, a malicious rumor of treasonable acts against the government was trumped up against her. Upon hearing the charges, the president wrote General Burbridge the following letter:

"Washington, August 8, 1864

Major-General Burbridge, Lexington, Ky.:

Last December Mrs. Emily T. Helm, half sister of Mrs. L., and widow of the rebel General Ben Hardin Helm, stopped here on her way from Georgia to Kentucky, and I gave her a paper, as I remember, to protect her against the mere fact of her being General Helm's widow. I hear a rumor today that you recently sought to arrest her, but was prevented by her presenting the paper from me. I do not intend to protect her against the consequences of disloyal words or acts, spoken or done by her since her return to Kentucky, and if the papers given her by me can be construed to give her protection for such words or acts, it is hereby revoked *pro tanto*. Deal with her for current conduct just as you would with any other.

A. Lincoln"

In the light of this letter it would appear that Mrs. Helm had actually violated a confidence, that once she was safely home in Kentucky she had forgotten Lincoln's

request and her promise not to embarrass him or the administration. Yet, there are certain indications which will lead one to believe that the rumors about her disloyal acts and words were not true. While she sympathized with the war-torn South, she was careful that no deed or statement of hers could be so construed as to make Lincoln regret his consideration of her. In Kentucky, Mrs. Helm was accorded every kindness and sympathy by her friends, irrespective of conflicting opinions, and it is not likely that she made many enemies, because of her sincere loyalty to the South. Of course, her position in Lexington society naturally kept her in the eyes of the public and some Federal officers might have been resentful of her Southern learnings, which apparently had official sanction.

Only once did Emilie Helm have occasion to use Lincoln's protection paper and that was when she asked a Federal officer to keep his troops, who had camped near her home, from trespassing and to cease taking her family's food as it was being cooked in their kitchen. The officer, in all likelihood, taken aback by the presidential order, complied with the request in a good-natured way. How General Burbridge learned of Mrs. Helm's immunity by presidential sanction is not clear. It is to be supposed the Federal officer reported Mrs. Helm's use of the protection paper to General Burbridge, his superior in command, and the latter, desiring to clear up the matter in case Mrs. Helm should make herself obnoxious, undoubtedly had the matter referred to President Lincoln, who appears to have been apprised of the circumstances through the unreliable channel of a rumor. The fact remains, however, that Mrs. Helm was not arrested and never had any trouble with the United States authorities, because she "could never have been so lost to (her) sense of obligation to President Lincoln."

In spite of Mrs. Helm's commendable personal conduct, the activities of her sister, Miss Katherine ("Kitty") Todd, and her mother, Mrs. Robert S. Todd, in behalf of the cause of the South may have placed the young widow in an extremely unfavorable light. Miss Todd and her mother were unusually active in the fall of 1864 when they attempted to prevent the infliction of the death penalty upon Captain McGee and Walter Ferguson, two Confederate soldiers who had ridden with the troops of General John Hunt Morgan. The Todds tried desperately to have the order of General Burbridge rescinded and they even went so far as to petition Lincoln to commute the sentence, but their efforts were in vain. It is believed that the President would have yielded to their pleas, but the petition of mercy was intercepted and Lincoln did not receive their request for commutation. Consequently, the two men were taken out of prison on November 15th, and were hanged near the fair-grounds in Lexington.

It was the policy of Lincoln to commute most of the death sentences of Burbridge, who considered criticism of the administration as treason; however, the constant, if not righteous, agitation of the Todds against the general's authority in Lexington must have caused Lincoln considerable embarrassment. Lincoln would have been especially chagrined in the summer and fall of 1864 to have had political capital made of the safeguard he gave Mrs. Helm. His letter to Burbridge nipped in the bud any criticism that might have arisen over the protection Mrs. Helm enjoyed, and yet at the same time Lincoln's orders did not place her position in jeopardy. She was an aristocratic lady whose position, whether the authorities liked it or not, placed her beyond the ordinary clutches of military authority. Lincoln would have not allowed Burbridge to deal with his sister-in-law, or any other member of the Todd family "just as you would with any other," in spite of the fact that such words were recorded over his signature.

A further proof that Mrs. Helm did not violate the confidence of Lincoln is indicated by his interest in attempting to help her get possession of her six hundred bales of cotton. In January, 1865, Lincoln granted passes to General James W. Singleton and Judge James Hughes to go South to buy cotton and tobacco and at this time he gave the men a brief history of his sister-in-law and told them of her ownership of a considerable number of bales of cotton which she had in the South. Lincoln requested Singleton and Hughes, if possible, to make some arrangement with Mrs. Helm about the sale of this commodity.

During the latter part of March, 1865, Emilie Helm, along with a companion, Mrs. Bernard Pratt, a relative of President Zachary Taylor and General Singleton, obtained passes to go to Richmond, Virginia, to see about the cotton, but she selected an inopportune time for a business trip, because the fall of Richmond was at last about to become an accomplished fact. Mrs. Helm was advised to leave immediately, which she did on the next flag of truce boat. By orders of General E. O. C. Ord, Captain Robert Lincoln, her nephew, was instructed to accompany Mrs. Helm and her friend from Fortress Monroe to a point near Petersburg. She arrived in Washington on March 25th, and registered at the Metropolitan Hotel. By this time Lincoln had secured from General Grant an order for the protection of the cotton, the great bulk of which was in storage in Atlanta, Georgia. The cotton had survived the scorched-earth policy of the Confederacy and the invading Yankee armies of the North, but, before she could sell it or have it insured, an accidental fire destroyed it. While in Washington and Baltimore on this business trip, Emilie did not call on her sister and brother-in-law, because they were at that time visiting with General Grant at City Point, Virginia.

As her residence in Kentucky had been intolerable, Emilie bought a home in Madison, Indiana, which was north of the Ohio River, where she could remain free of the turmoil of military rule. There she became the organist in Christ Church, where, as an accomplished musician, she earned a livelihood. The remainder of her long life was spent in devotion to her gallant husband's memory, and her cruel fate was softened somewhat by her interest in her three children, Katherine, Elodie and Ben Hardin. As a widow in her early twenties, she had as her main purpose in life the education of her children, and this expense necessitated the acceptance of some suitable position.

After residing in Madison for ten or twelve years, she moved to Louisville and for about two years taught a class in music. This gave her an opportunity to visit on many occasions the ancestral estate of the Kentucky Helms, located near the northern city limits of Elizabethtown. Upon the renewal of her acquaintances in the little village where she and her husband had known so much happiness, she decided to return to Elizabethtown where she was appointed postmistress by President Chester A. Arthur, an office which she retained for about twelve years. In Elizabethtown she purchased a dignified, gray brick home on Poplar Street which had been built about the year 1820.

Moving again to Louisville, after giving up her position in the Elizabethtown postoffice, she made her residence in that city for a short period. Ben Hardin had always promised his mother to buy a Blue Grass farm, as soon as he could make the money, and in 1912 he purchased the colonial home of Colonel Abraham Bowman, situated near Lexington on the Bowman's Mill Road. This farm was formerly the property of General Levi Todd on which their pioneer ancestor had erected Todds Fort in 1778. There, in an atmosphere of the past, surrounded by the trappings of her soldier-husband, and deeply imbued with the Lincoln tradition, she died February 20, 1930, at the remarkable age of ninety-three years.

The most significant event in her life, after the war had ended and peace again hovered over the Southland, was the occasion of the reunion of the First Kentucky (Orphan) Brigade of Infantry at Elizabethtown on September 19, 1884. It was at this solemn and impressive gathering of Confederate veterans that the remains of General Ben Hardin Helm was re-interred in the burial ground of his fathers, in a private cemetery on the ancestral acres of his pioneer forebears. Here, in the shadow of a great granite shaft erected by the State of Kentucky in honor of Governor John L. Helm, the Confederate general's remains were placed among his kindred.

"Yon marble minstrel's voiceless stone
In deathless song shall tell,
When many a vanished age hath flown,
The story how ye fell;
Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,
Nor Time's remorseless doom,
Shall dim one ray of Glory's light
That gilds your deathless tomb."

—Theodore O'Hara,
The Bivouac of the Dead

SONGS FOR THE



BRAVE OLD ABE

Air—"Auld Lang Syne."

From West, from East, from South, from North,
What eager-growing throngs
For brave Old Abe are pouring forth
Their patriotic songs!
For brave Old Abe, my boys!
For brave Old Abe;
Take up the song, ring it along
For brave Old Abe!

Old Abe, they say, is not genteel—
He wears a slouching hat;
But, with a heart as true as steel,
He's none the worse for that.
For brave Old Abe, my boys!
For brave Old Abe;
As true as steel, with heart to feel,
Is brave Old Abe!

Our ship Old Abe can navigate—
At that he's tried his hand;
Again the helm he guides so well,
We'll trust to his command.
To brave Old Abe, my boys!
To brave Old Abe;
We'll give the helm of this good realm
To brave Old Abe!



WHEN ABE GOES IN AGAIN

Air—"When Johnny Comes Marching Home."

Election day comes soon again;
Hurra! Hurra!
And we will put old Abe in then,
Hurra! Hurra!
Then raise the standard of the free,
And make the Copperheads bend their knee—
Won't they all feel blue
When Abe goes marching in.

Get ready, then, for the jubilee;
Hurra! Hurra!
And give honest Abe a three times three;
Hurra! Hurra!
For with General Grant, and Sherman too,
He'll break rebellion's back in two.
O, won't Jeff feel blue
When Abe goes marching in.

Then hand in hand we'll march, my boys;
Hurra! Hurra!
And never mind the "peace" men's noise;
Hurra! Hurra!
There's now no chance for "Little Mac";
For the "Train" has run him off the track.
So we'll all feel gay
When Abe goes in again.



It is a Presidential campaign year in a war-weary America; a Republican President, assailed by criticism from within his own party, battles to stay in office for four more years; and squabbling Democrats try to unite behind a single candidate.

The year? 1864, of course. The President? Abraham Lincoln. The songs? Authentic—and real rousers. Campaign songs were customary at the political rallies of the time (some of the outdoor gatherings drew as many as 20,000 of the party faithful). These songs appeared in "The Tremaine Brothers' Lincoln and Johnson Campaign Song-Book, Containing 40 Pages of Soul-Stirring Pieces, Written Expressly for This Campaign," a pamphlet published in 1864 and now residing in the collection of Harry W. Malm, a Chicago history buff, who brought it to our attention.

Perhaps there is no better way to celebrate Lincoln's birthday—and fortify ourselves for this month's Presidential ballyhoo—than to evoke the mood of Lincoln's greatest contest. It was a bitter campaign; Lincoln's Democratic opponent, Gen. George B. McClellan (the "Little Mac" of the songs), had been relieved of command by Lincoln himself only two years before. Presidential critics were protesting mounting taxes and repeated defeats at the front; "Copperheads" were favoring a rapid end to the war based on concessions to the South. Despite early-campaign despair, however, Lincoln shrewdly managed his election battle and won by a handsome 55 percent majority.

Although they don't write campaign songs like these anymore, the airs of 1864 remain, and Americans who look for omens may feel relieved, for "Abraham the Great, and General Grant his mate, / They'll bring us all right in the morning."



GREAT CAMPAIGN



LINCOLN THE CHOICE OF THE NATION

Air—"Red, White and Blue."

For Lincoln, the choice of the nation,
The pride of the fearless and free;
We'll drink to his health and his station
Whate'er that relation may be.
His heart beats for freedom remaining
On the soil where our liberty grew;
For the banner our heroes sustaining—
The free flag—the Red, White and Blue.

Our voices are joined then for Union,
The stars and stripes are above;
Huzza all for Lincoln and Johnson!
Huzza for the men that we love!
The old Union ship, when well guided,
'Twill be found that the timbers are true;
And soon will the storm have subsided
That threatened the Red, White and Blue.



HURRA FOR ABRAHAM!

Air—"Hurra for the Days of Old."

There is a place not far from here,
Its name is Washington;
And to that place they sent "Old Abe,"
In eighteen sixty-one.
He took the helm 'midst angry storms
Raised by secession's ire;
And by the firmness of his will
He's quenching treason's fire.
Fire!—fire!—fire!
Hurra for Abraham!
Hurra for Abraham!
We mean that he
Shall once more be
The host for Uncle Sam.



ABRAHAM THE GREAT AND GENERAL GRANT HIS MATE

Oh, the Copperhead crew, they don't know what to do,
Since freedom in the South is plainly dawning;
They fear that this short night, of a little blood and fight,
Will bring us all right in the morning.
Chorus—Then let us work away, and care not what
they say,
For Union in the South is plainly dawning,
With Abraham the Great and General Grant
his mate,
They'll bring us all right in the morning.
Abraham the Great and General Grant his
mate,
They'll bring us all right in the morning.

